

# Teacher's Scoring Guide



**Grade 9**  
**English/Language Arts**  
**Fall 2007**

**Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress**



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## INTRODUCTION

During the fall of 2007, Indiana students in Grades 3 through 10 participated in the administration of *ISTEP+*. The test for *ISTEP+* Fall 2007 consisted of a multiple-choice section and an applied skills section. For the fall testing, the multiple-choice section was machine-scored. The applied skills section consisted of multiple-choice questions, open-ended questions, and a writing prompt. The multiple-choice questions were machine-scored, while the open-ended questions and writing prompt were hand-scored.

The test results for both the multiple-choice and applied skills sections were returned to the schools in late November 2007. Copies of student responses were returned to the schools in early December 2007. It is the expectation of the Indiana Department of Education that schools will take this opportunity to invite students and parents to sit down with teachers to discuss the results. To support this endeavor, the Indiana Department of Education has prepared the following *Teacher's Scoring Guide*. The purpose of this guide is to help teachers to:

- understand the methods used to score the *ISTEP+* Fall 2007 applied skills section, and
- discuss and interpret these results with students and parents.

In order to use this guide effectively, you will also need the Student Report and a copy of the student's work.

There are two scoring guides for Grade 9, English/Language Arts and Mathematics. In this English/Language Arts guide, you will find:

- an introduction,
- a list of the English/Language Arts Grade 8 Indiana Academic Standards,\*
- rubrics (scoring rules) used to score the open-ended questions and the writing prompt,
- multiple-choice questions with correct response indicated,
- anchor papers that are actual examples of student work (transcribed in this guide for clarity and ease of reading), and
- descriptions of the ways in which the response meets the rubric criteria for each of the score points.

When you review the contents of the scoring guide, keep in mind that this guide is an overview. If you have questions, write via e-mail ([istep@doe.state.in.us](mailto:istep@doe.state.in.us)) or call the Indiana Department of Education at (317) 232-9050.

\*Because *ISTEP+* is administered early in the fall, the Grade 9 test is based on the academic standards through Grade 8.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS WRITING ASSESSMENT

The ability to write clearly and effectively is more important today than ever. By asking students to write, educators send a clear message to students that the ability to organize one's thoughts clearly and logically and to use standard language (grammar) conventions is valuable. This is why the Indiana Department of Education developed a writing assessment for *ISTEP+*. The purpose of the writing task is to assess students' abilities to (1) communicate effectively in writing and (2) use correct language conventions (e.g., grammar, punctuation, and capitalization).

The writing assessment developed for *ISTEP+* is based on the recognition that writing is a process. For this reason, the writing tasks are aligned as closely as possible with the writing process.

### Students

- **are given a writing prompt.**  
The prompt describes what the students should write about. For example, in Grade 9 students were asked to write a persuasive letter to a citizens' committee in which they solve the problem of littering in the community.
- **engage in pre-writing and drafting.**  
Pre-writing and drafting are planning phases. During these phases, students begin to organize and put their ideas on paper. The pre-writing and initial drafts are not scored.
- **revise their writing.**  
During the revision stage, students focus on the content, organization of ideas, and overall meaning of the writing. Students should ask themselves, "Does my writing say what I want it to say?"
- **edit their writing.**  
The focus during the editing phase is on the correct use of paragraphing, grammar, word usage, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. An Editing Checklist is provided in the test book to remind students to review their papers for these elements.
- **complete a revised and edited draft.**  
The revised and edited draft is the completed student response. **Only this revised and edited draft is scored.**

Although a standardized testing situation does not permit full implementation of the writing process (e.g., peer/teacher conferencing or multiple revisions), the process described above encourages students to use the skills learned in the classroom to communicate their ideas effectively. **The Indiana Department of Education encourages teachers to familiarize students with the writing process and the rubrics used to score their writing.**

## RUBRICS FOR THE WRITING ASSESSMENT

**A rubric is a description of student performance that clearly articulates the requirements for each of the score points.** Scoring rubrics are essential because they ensure that all papers are scored objectively. Moreover, because the writing rubrics were developed by Indiana teachers, they represent those characteristics of writing that Indiana educators identify as important.

There are two types of rubrics used to score student writing on *ISTEP+*.

- **Writing Applications Rubric**

This rubric assesses the students' ability to communicate their ideas effectively. The Grades 6–12 Writing Applications Rubric has four major categories: (1) Ideas and Content, (2) Organization, (3) Style, and (4) Voice. Under each major category there are specific criteria that describe the category more fully. For a detailed description of the categories and the scoring criteria for each of the six performance levels, see the Writing Applications Rubric on pages 10 through 15.

- **Language Conventions Rubric**

This rubric assesses students' abilities to use paragraphing, grammar, word usage, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. The Grades 9–12 Language Conventions Rubric is directly linked to the Editing Checklist in students' test books. For a description of the Language Conventions Rubric, see page 16.

In conjunction with the writing rubrics, anchor papers are used to score student writing. **Anchor papers are examples of actual student responses that meet the rubric criteria for a particular score point.** Anchor papers for Writing Applications and Language Conventions are shown on pages 22 through 32. These anchor papers have been transcribed for publication to make them clearer and easier to read.

Based on the rubrics and the anchor papers, each student paper receives two scores, one for Writing Applications and one for Language Conventions. Both of these scores are derived holistically. In holistic scoring, each paper is assigned the score points that provide the **best overall description of the performance**. In this scoring process, evaluators examine each response as a whole for the body of evidence of writing ability, rather than concentrating on any single factor, such as length of the essay or the number of errors contained in the writing.

Each score point covers a range of performance. The anchor papers presented in this guide represent the types of responses most commonly found at each score point level. These anchor papers also represent the most typical combinations of Writing Applications and Language Conventions scores (e.g., 6/4, 5/4, 4/4, 3/3, 2/2, 1/1). Other combinations of scores, though not as common, are also possible.

## **RUBRICS FOR THE WRITING ASSESSMENT (cont.)**

If a response is unscorable, it is assigned one of the following condition codes:

- A Blank/No response/Refusal
- B Illegible
- C Written predominantly in a language other than English
- D Insufficient response/Copied from text
- E Response not related to test question or scoring rule

In addition to their function as a scoring device, rubrics are an effective instructional tool. We encourage teachers to use rubrics as a regular part of classroom instruction. Teachers may discuss the rubric categories, provide examples of the strategy/skill from published and student writing, model the strategy/skill that supports each category, and use the rubrics as a basis for teacher/peer/self evaluations. These activities will support student growth and allow students to enter the testing situation with confidence.

## **SCORING NOTE FOR LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS**

In the writing prompt and extended-response question, students are not penalized more than once for a given error (e.g., a capitalization or punctuation error associated with a run-on sentence or sentence fragment).

## ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS

### GRADE 8 INDIANA ACADEMIC STANDARDS

#### ☐ **READING: Word Recognition, Fluency, and Vocabulary Development**

Students use their knowledge of word parts and word relationships, as well as context clues (the meaning of the text around a word), to determine the meaning of specialized vocabulary and to understand the precise meaning of grade-level-appropriate words.

#### ☐ **READING: Comprehension**

Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They describe and connect the essential ideas, arguments, and perspectives of the text by using their knowledge of text structure, organization, and purpose. In addition to regular classroom reading, students read a variety of grade-level-appropriate narrative (story) and expository (informational and technical) texts, including classic and contemporary literature, poetry, magazines, newspapers, reference materials, and online information.

#### ☐ **READING: Literary Response and Analysis**

Students read and respond to grade-level-appropriate historically or culturally significant works of literature that reflect and enhance their study of history and social science. They clarify the ideas and connect them to other literary works.

#### ☐ **WRITING: Process**

Students discuss, list, and graphically organize writing ideas. They write clear, coherent, and focused essays. Students progress through the stages of the writing process and proofread, edit, and revise writing.

#### ☐ **WRITING: Applications**

Students continue to write narrative (story), expository (informational), persuasive, and descriptive essays (of at least 750 to 1,000 words). Students are introduced to writing technical documents. Student writing demonstrates a command of Standard English and the research, organizational, and drafting strategies outlined in Standard 4—WRITING: Process. Writing demonstrates an awareness of the audience (intended reader) and purpose for writing.

#### ☐ **WRITING: English Language Conventions**

Students write using Standard English conventions appropriate to the grade level.

#### ☐ **LISTENING AND SPEAKING: Skills, Strategies, and Applications**

Students deliver focused, coherent presentations that convey ideas clearly and relate to the background and interests of the audience. They evaluate the content of oral communication. Students deliver well-organized formal presentations using traditional speech strategies, including narration, exposition, persuasion, and description. Students use the same Standard English conventions for oral speech that they use in their writing.

*(Because this standard does not lend itself to a paper-and-pencil test, it is not currently assessed by ISTEP+.)*

**NOTE:** This page provides an overview of the Indiana Academic Standards. The IDOE Web site at [www.doe.state.in.us](http://www.doe.state.in.us) contains a complete version of the Indiana Academic Standards, which may be downloaded.

## WRITING APPLICATIONS OVERVIEW

### Grades 6–12

#### Overview of the Writing Applications Rubric

This rubric summarizes the scoring requirements for each of the six performance levels. To determine the criteria for a specific score point, read across the rows.

For more detailed information about each of the six score points, refer to the Writing Applications Rubric on pages 10 through 15. For information about the Language Conventions Rubric, turn to page 16.

Score Level	Ideas and Content	Organization
	Does the writing sample	Does the writing sample
<b>6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fully accomplish the task?</li> <li>include thorough, relevant, and complete ideas?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organize ideas logically?</li> </ul>
<b>5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fully accomplish the task?</li> <li>include many relevant ideas?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organize ideas logically?</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>accomplish the task?</li> <li>include relevant ideas?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organize ideas logically?</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>minimally accomplish the task?</li> <li>include some relevant ideas?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exhibit an attempt to organize ideas logically?</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>only partially accomplish the task?</li> <li>include few relevant ideas?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exhibit a minimal attempt to organize ideas logically?</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fail to accomplish the task?</li> <li>include very few relevant ideas?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organize ideas illogically?</li> </ul>

**Chart continues on page 9.**



## WRITING APPLICATIONS OVERVIEW

### Grades 6–12

Chart continued from page 8.

Score Level	Style	Voice
	Does the writing sample	Does the writing sample
<b>6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exhibit exceptional word usage?</li> <li>demonstrate exceptional writing technique?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate effective adjustment of language and tone to task and reader?</li> </ul>
<b>5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exhibit very good word usage?</li> <li>demonstrate very good writing technique?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate effective adjustment of language and tone to task and reader?</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exhibit good word usage?</li> <li>demonstrate good writing technique?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate an attempt to adjust language and tone to task and reader?</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exhibit ordinary word usage?</li> <li>demonstrate average writing technique?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate an attempt to adjust language and tone to task and reader?</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exhibit minimal word usage?</li> <li>demonstrate minimal writing technique?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate language and tone that may be inappropriate to task and reader?</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exhibit less than minimal word usage?</li> <li>demonstrate less than minimal writing technique?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate language and tone that may be inappropriate to task and reader?</li> </ul>

**NOTE:** The chart on pages 8–9 is only a brief summary of the score points. It is not appropriate to use this summary as the sole tool in scoring student papers. The more in-depth Writing Applications Rubric is used for the actual scoring of *ISTEP+* student papers and may be found on pages 10 through 15.

## Writing Applications Rubric Grades 6–12

<b>SCORE POINT 6</b>	
<p>A Score Point 6 paper is rare. It fully accomplishes the task in a thorough and insightful manner and has a distinctive quality that sets it apart as an outstanding performance.</p>	
<b>Ideas and Content</b>	
<p><b>Does the writing sample fully accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• present a unifying theme or main idea without going off on tangents?</li> <li>• stay completely focused on topic and task?</li> </ul> <p><b>Does the writing sample include thorough, relevant, and complete ideas? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• include in-depth information and exceptional supporting details that are fully developed?</li> <li>• fully explore many facets of the topic?</li> </ul>	
<b>Organization</b>	
<p><b>Are the ideas in the writing sample organized logically? Does the writing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• present a meaningful, cohesive whole with a beginning, a middle, and an end (i.e., include an inviting introduction and a strong conclusion)?</li> <li>• progress in an order that enhances meaning?</li> <li>• include smooth transitions between ideas, sentences, and paragraphs to enhance meaning of text (i.e., have a clear connection of ideas and use topic sentences)?</li> </ul>	
<b>Style</b>	
<p><b>Does the writing sample exhibit exceptional word usage? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• include vocabulary to make explanations detailed and precise, descriptions rich, and actions clear and vivid (e.g., varied word choices, action words, appropriate modifiers, sensory details)?</li> <li>• demonstrate control of a challenging vocabulary?</li> </ul> <p><b>Does the writing sample demonstrate exceptional writing technique?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the writing exceptionally fluent?</li> <li>• Does it include varied sentence patterns, including complex sentences?</li> <li>• Does it demonstrate use of writer's techniques (e.g., literary conventions such as imagery and dialogue and/or literary genres such as humor and suspense)?</li> </ul>	
<b>Voice</b>	
<p><b>Does the writing sample demonstrate effective adjustment of language and tone to task and reader? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exhibit appropriate register (e.g., formal, personal, or dialect) to suit task?</li> <li>• demonstrate a strong sense of audience?</li> <li>• exhibit an original perspective (e.g., authoritative, lively, and/or exciting)?</li> </ul>	

**NOTE:** These scoring rubrics are used for students tested on the fall *ISTEP+* assessment in Grades 6–12.

## Writing Applications Rubric Grades 6–12

<b>SCORE POINT 5</b>	
A Score Point 5 paper represents a solid performance. It fully accomplishes the task, but lacks the overall level of sophistication and consistency of a Score Point 6 paper.	
<b>Ideas and Content</b>	
<p><b>Does the writing sample fully accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• present a unifying theme or main idea without going off on tangents?</li> <li>• stay focused on topic and task?</li> </ul> <p><b>Does the writing sample include many relevant ideas? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide in-depth information and more than adequate supporting details that are developed?</li> <li>• explore many facets of the topic?</li> </ul>	
<b>Organization</b>	
<p><b>Are the ideas in the writing sample organized logically? Does the writing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• present a meaningful, cohesive whole with a beginning, a middle, and an end (i.e., include a solid introduction and conclusion)?</li> <li>• progress in an order that enhances meaning of text?</li> <li>• include smooth transitions (e.g., use topic sentences) between sentences and paragraphs to enhance meaning of text? (Writing may have an occasional lapse.)</li> </ul>	
<b>Style</b>	
<p><b>Does the writing sample exhibit very good word usage? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• include vocabulary to make explanations detailed and precise, descriptions rich, and actions clear and vivid?</li> <li>• demonstrate control of vocabulary?</li> </ul> <p><b>Does the writing sample demonstrate very good writing technique?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the writing very fluent?</li> <li>• Does it include varied sentence patterns, including complex sentences?</li> <li>• Does it demonstrate use of writer's techniques (e.g., literary conventions such as imagery and dialogue and/or literary genres such as humor and suspense)?</li> </ul>	
<b>Voice</b>	
<p><b>Does the writing sample demonstrate effective adjustment of language and tone to task and reader? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exhibit appropriate register (e.g., formal, personal, or dialect) to suit task?</li> <li>• demonstrate a sense of audience?</li> <li>• exhibit an original perspective (e.g., authoritative, lively, and/or exciting)?</li> </ul>	

**NOTE:** These scoring rubrics are used for students tested on the fall *ISTEP+* assessment in Grades 6–12.

## Writing Applications Rubric Grades 6–12

### SCORE POINT 4

A Score Point 4 paper represents a good performance. It accomplishes the task, but generally needs to exhibit more development, better organization, or a more sophisticated writing style to receive a higher score.

#### Ideas and Content

**Does the writing sample accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)? Does it**

- present a unifying theme or main idea? (Writing may include minor tangents.)
- stay mostly focused on topic and task?

**Does the writing sample include relevant ideas? Does it**

- include sufficient information and supporting details? (Details may not be fully developed; ideas may be listed.)
- explore some facets of the topic?

#### Organization

**Are the ideas in the writing sample organized logically? Does the writing**

- present a meaningful whole with a beginning, a middle, and an end despite an occasional lapse (e.g., a weak introduction or conclusion)?
- generally progress in an order that enhances meaning of text?
- include transitions between sentences and paragraphs to enhance meaning of text? (Transitions may be rough, although some topic sentences are included.)

#### Style

**Does the writing sample exhibit good word usage? Does it**

- include vocabulary that is appropriately chosen, with words that clearly convey the writer's meaning?
- demonstrate control of basic vocabulary?

**Does the writing sample demonstrate good writing technique?**

- Is the writing fluent?
- Does it exhibit some varied sentence patterns, including some complex sentences?
- Does it demonstrate an attempt to use writer's techniques (e.g., literary conventions such as imagery and dialogue and/or literary genres such as humor and suspense)?

#### Voice

**Does the writing sample demonstrate an attempt to adjust language and tone to task and reader? Does it**

- generally exhibit appropriate register (e.g., formal, personal, or dialect) to suit task? (The writing may occasionally slip out of register.)
- demonstrate some sense of audience?
- attempt an original perspective?

**NOTE:** These scoring rubrics are used for students tested on the fall *ISTEP+* assessment in Grades 6–12.

## Writing Applications Rubric Grades 6–12

<b>SCORE POINT 3</b>	
<p><b>A Score Point 3 paper represents a performance that minimally accomplishes the task. Some elements of development, organization, and writing style are weak.</b></p>	
<b>Ideas and Content</b>	
<p><b>Does the writing sample minimally accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attempt a unifying theme or main idea?</li> <li>• stay somewhat focused on topic and task?</li> </ul> <p><b>Does the writing sample include some relevant ideas? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• include some information with only a few details, or list ideas without supporting details?</li> <li>• explore some facets of the topic?</li> </ul>	
<b>Organization</b>	
<p><b>Is there an attempt to logically organize ideas in the writing sample? Does the writing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a beginning, a middle, or an end that may be weak or absent?</li> <li>• demonstrate an attempt to progress in an order that enhances meaning? (Progression of text may sometimes be unclear or out of order.)</li> <li>• demonstrate an attempt to include transitions? (Are some topic sentences used? Are transitions between sentences and paragraphs weak or absent?)</li> </ul>	
<b>Style</b>	
<p><b>Does the writing sample exhibit ordinary word usage? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contain basic vocabulary, with words that are predictable and common?</li> <li>• demonstrate some control of vocabulary?</li> </ul> <p><b>Does the writing sample demonstrate average writing technique?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the writing generally fluent?</li> <li>• Does it contain mostly simple sentences (although there may be an attempt at more varied sentence patterns)?</li> <li>• Is it generally ordinary and predictable?</li> </ul>	
<b>Voice</b>	
<p><b>Does the writing sample demonstrate an attempt to adjust language and tone to task and reader? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate a difficulty in establishing a register (e.g., formal, personal, or dialect)?</li> <li>• demonstrate little sense of audience?</li> <li>• generally lack an original perspective?</li> </ul>	

**NOTE:** These scoring rubrics are used for students tested on the fall *ISTEP+* assessment in Grades 6–12.

## Writing Applications Rubric Grades 6–12

### SCORE POINT 2

A Score Point 2 paper represents a performance that only partially accomplishes the task. Some responses may exhibit difficulty maintaining a focus. Others may be too brief to provide sufficient development of the topic or evidence of adequate organizational or writing style.

#### Ideas and Content

Does the writing sample only partially accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)? Does it

- attempt a main idea?
- sometimes lose focus or ineffectively display focus?

Does the writing sample include few relevant ideas? Does it

- include little information and few or no details?
- explore only one or two facets of the topic?

#### Organization

Is there a minimal attempt to logically organize ideas in the writing sample?

- Does the writing have only one or two of the three elements: beginning, middle, and end?
- Is the writing sometimes difficult to follow? (Progression of text may be confusing or unclear.)
- Are transitions weak or absent (e.g., few or no topic sentences)?

#### Style

Does the writing sample exhibit minimal word usage? Does it

- contain limited vocabulary? (Some words may be used incorrectly.)
- demonstrate minimal control of vocabulary?

Does the writing sample demonstrate minimal writing technique?

- Does the writing exhibit some fluency?
- Does it rely mostly on simple sentences?
- Is it often repetitive, predictable, or dull?

#### Voice

Does the writing sample demonstrate language and tone that may be inappropriate to task and reader? Does it

- demonstrate use of a register inappropriate to the task (e.g., slang or dialect in a formal setting)?
- demonstrate little or no sense of audience?
- lack an original perspective?

**NOTE:** These scoring rubrics are used for students tested on the fall *ISTEP+* assessment in Grades 6–12.

## Writing Applications Rubric Grades 6–12

<b>SCORE POINT 1</b>
<p><b>A Score Point 1 paper represents a performance that fails to accomplish the task. It exhibits considerable difficulty in areas of development, organization, and writing style. The writing is generally either very brief or rambling and repetitive, sometimes resulting in a response that may be difficult to read or comprehend.</b></p>
<p><b>Ideas and Content</b></p> <p><b>Does the writing sample fail to accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)? Is it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• difficult for the reader to discern the main idea?</li> <li>• too brief or too repetitive to establish or maintain a focus?</li> </ul> <p><b>Does the writing sample include very few relevant ideas?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does it include little information with few or no details or unrelated details?</li> <li>• Is it unsuccessful in attempts to explore any facets of the prompt?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Organization</b></p> <p><b>Are the ideas in the writing sample organized illogically?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does it have only one or two of the three elements: beginning, middle, or end?</li> <li>• Is it difficult to follow, with the order possibly difficult to discern?</li> <li>• Are transitions weak or absent (e.g., without topic sentences)?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Style</b></p> <p><b>Does the writing sample exhibit less than minimal word usage? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contain limited vocabulary, with many words used incorrectly?</li> <li>• demonstrate minimal or less than minimal control of vocabulary?</li> </ul> <p><b>Does the writing sample demonstrate less than minimal writing technique? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lack fluency?</li> <li>• demonstrate problems with sentence patterns?</li> <li>• consist of writing that is flat and lifeless?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Voice</b></p> <p><b>Does the writing sample demonstrate language and tone that may be inappropriate to task and reader? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate difficulty in choosing an appropriate register?</li> <li>• demonstrate a lack of a sense of audience?</li> <li>• lack an original perspective?</li> </ul>

**NOTE:** These scoring rubrics are used for students tested on the fall *ISTEP+* assessment in Grades 6–12.

## Language Conventions Rubric Grades 9–12

In their writing, students will apply the Standard English conventions defined in the Indiana Academic Standards for their grade and all previous grades.

Score	Does the writing sample exhibit a superior command of language skills?
<b>4</b>	<p>A Score Point 4 paper exhibits a superior command of written English language conventions. The paper provides evidence that the student has a thorough control of the concepts outlined in the Indiana Academic Standards associated with the student's grade level. In a Score Point 4 paper, there are no errors that impair the flow of communication. Errors are generally of the first-draft variety or occur when the student attempts sophisticated sentence construction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a superior command of capitalization conventions?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a superior command of the mechanics of punctuation?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a superior command of grade-level-appropriate spelling?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a superior command of grammar and Standard English usage?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a superior command of paragraphing?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a superior command of sentence structure by not using run-on sentences or sentence fragments?</li> </ul>
Score	Does the writing sample exhibit a good control of language skills?
<b>3</b>	<p>In a Score Point 3 paper, errors are occasional and are often of the first-draft variety; they have a minor impact on the flow of communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a good control of capitalization conventions?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a good control of the mechanics of punctuation?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a good control of grade-level-appropriate spelling?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a good control of grammar and Standard English usage?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a good control of paragraphing?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a good control of sentence structure by only occasionally using run-on sentences or sentence fragments?</li> </ul>
Score	Does the writing sample exhibit a fair control of language skills?
<b>2</b>	<p>In a Score Point 2 paper, errors are typically frequent and may occasionally impede the flow of communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a fair control of capitalization conventions?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a fair control of the mechanics of punctuation?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a fair control of grade-level-appropriate spelling?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a fair control of grammar and Standard English usage?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a fair control of paragraphing?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a fair control of sentence structure by frequently using run-on sentences or sentence fragments?</li> </ul>
Score	Does the writing sample exhibit a minimal or less than minimal control of language skills?
<b>1</b>	<p>In a Score Point 1 paper, errors are serious and numerous. The reader may need to stop and reread part of the sample and may struggle to discern the writer's meaning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a minimal control of capitalization conventions?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a minimal control of the mechanics of punctuation?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a minimal control of grade-level-appropriate spelling?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a minimal control of grammar and Standard English usage?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a minimal control of paragraphing?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a minimal control of sentence structure by using many run-on sentences or sentence fragments?</li> </ul>

**NOTE:** The elements of this rubric are applied holistically; no element is intended to supersede any other element. The variety and proportion of errors in relation to the length of the writing sample are considered. A very brief paper consisting of two or three sentences may receive no more than 2 score points.



## **WRITING PROMPT AND STUDENT ANCHOR PAPERS**

The following section contains an overview of the fall 2007 writing prompt. This section also includes transcriptions of student anchor papers that received particular scores based on the Writing Applications and Language Conventions rubrics found on pages 10 through 16 of this guide. Each sample paper is accompanied by an explanation of the score points it received.

Please note that in the sample anchor papers included in the scoring guide, actual names of people are often replaced by initials. Similarly, actual places are often replaced by generic designations (e.g., *Anytown* or *Hometown*).

**Writing Prompt**  
WRITING: Applications/English Language Conventions

**Pages 18 and 19 provide an overview of the parts of the writing prompt.**

**Writing Prompt**

The prompt describes what ideas students should include in their writing.

**Too Much Trash!**

Read the writing prompt below and complete the writing activity.

Littering has recently become a problem in your community. While many people use proper receptacles, plastic bottles, soda cans, and papers continue to litter parks, shopping malls, and sidewalks. A citizens' committee has been organized to address this problem.

Think of a creative solution to the problem of litter in your community. Then write a persuasive letter to the citizens' committee in which you describe your solution and how it will affect both the community and its litter problem. Be sure to include specific reasons why your solution will solve the problem of littering in your community.

Be sure to include

- a description of your solution
- how your solution will affect both the community and its litter problem
- specific reasons why your solution will solve the problem of littering in your community
- the parts of a letter
- an introduction, a body, and a conclusion to your persuasive letter



Use the Pre-Writing/Planning space or additional paper for notes, lists, webs, outlines, or anything else that might help you plan your writing. Then write your persuasive letter on the lined pages. Be sure to write neatly. Using the Editing Checklist on page 93, check your writing for correct paragraphing, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and the use of Standard English.

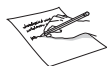
**NOTE:** Only your writing on the lined pages in this book will be scored.

### Pre-Writing/Planning

**NOTE:** The page reference above for the Editing Checklist refers to its location in the actual test book.

## Pre-Writing/ Planning

Students can use the Pre-Writing/Planning space to help them focus their thoughts on the requirements of the prompt and to generate ideas to include in their writing. **The writing on the Pre-Writing/Planning pages is not scored.**



Whenever you see this icon, you will be doing a writing activity. Your writing will not be scored on your personal opinions or choices, but will be scored objectively on

- how clearly you address the prompt
- how well you organize your ideas
- how effectively you express yourself
- how consistently you use correct paragraphing, grammar, spelling, and punctuation

Be sure to use the rules of Standard English. Standard English is the English commonly used in formal writing. It does not include slang or jargon.

## Writing Icon

The writing icon, which appears before both the writing prompt and the extended-response question, alerts the student that the response will be scored for writing. The writing icon boxes on pages 86 and 96 of the test book include the criteria by which the writing will be judged.

## Editing Checklist

- 1 Check your capitalization and punctuation.
- 2 Spell all words correctly.
- 3 Check for sentence fragments or run-on sentences.
- 4 Keep verb tense consistent.
- 5 Make sure subject and verb agree.
- 6 Use words according to the rules of Standard English.
- 7 Remember to paragraph correctly.

## Editing Checklist

The Editing Checklist appears after the final draft and reminds students to review their writing for correct paragraphing, grammar, word usage, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

## Writing Applications

### Score Point 6

The following list describes a writing sample (shown on pages 22 and 23) that earns a **Score Point 6** using the *ISTEP+* Writing Applications Rubric.

This sample

- fully accomplishes the task and addresses all specific points of the prompt (i.e., writes a persuasive letter that describes a solution to the problem of litter and provides reasons why this solution will solve the problem).
- stays completely focused on the task and does not go off on tangents.
- provides in-depth information and strong supporting details that are fully developed (e.g., *Our town needs to add a trash can on every corner; With the purchase of trash cans, people don't have to walk as far and therefore don't have an excuse for littering*).
- organizes ideas logically and creates a meaningful, cohesive whole; has a strong introduction (e.g., *A logical explanation [explanation] as to how we are going to put an end to littering, is to spend a little extra money and get some help*), body, and conclusion (e.g., *Spending a little extra money on a big deal doesn't seem to [too] out of reach. I say we save our town and put a stop to littering*).
- has fully developed paragraphs, clear topic sentences, and fluent transitions (e.g., *Another solution I would like to bring to the drawing board is a patrol [patrol] team; Aftering [After] realizing the affects [effects] of littering, it doesn't take a genius to figure out how my solutions are going to solve the problem*).
- uses challenging vocabulary that is appropriate to the topic (e.g., *beneficial, perish, eliminate, spick and span, consequences*).
- is fluent and easy to read; the writer uses varied sentence patterns, including complex sentence structures (e.g., *Now as a chain reaction, when we get our citizens to help, then our littering will decrease, and that is when our community shines*).
- exhibits exceptional writing technique (e.g., *I know this method works because logical reasoning says, "If it is within a persons [person's] reach, they will use it!"*; *When they do litter, with my community service idea, they won't ever litter again*).
- displays a strong sense of audience and effectively adjusts language and tone to the task and reader (e.g., *These three solutions will put a positive spin on our citizens and the littering problem; I know I am speaking not just for myself, but most people in Hometown*).

**NOTE:** A Score Point 6 paper is an outstanding performance and therefore is rare. This paper demonstrates the characteristics of good writing as outlined in the rubric.

## Language Conventions

### Score Point 4

The following list describes a writing sample (shown on pages 22 and 23) that earns a **Score Point 4** using the *ISTEP+* Language Conventions Rubric.

This sample

- has correct capitalization.
- has mostly correct punctuation.
- has some spelling errors (e.g., *explanation* [explanation], *parol* [patrol], *Any one* [Anyone], *garuntee* [guarantee]).
- has correct grammar but has some word usage errors (e.g., *Our community could be* [have] *just a couple of men to parol* [patrol] *our streets*; *Spending a little extra money on a big deal doesn't seem to* [too] *out of reach*).
- uses paragraphs correctly.
- has no run-on sentences or sentence fragments.

## Persuasive Letter

Dear citizen committee,

It has come to my attention that our streets are polluted with litter. I believe we need to put a stop to it, and I have come forth with a solution! Hometown may be a little town, but I live here and it would be beneficial to our community if it were clean. A logical explanation as to how we are going to put an end to littering, is to spend a little extra money and get some help.

There is way too much trash in our city. We either put an end to our problem now, or we will all perish from polluted air and litter. Now all my solution takes is a little extra money to make our plan possible. Our town needs to add a trash can on every corner! I realize not everyone is like me, but I think if someone is about to litter and then sees a trash can two feet away from them, then they would take the extra steps to keep it off the streets.

I know this method works because logical reasoning says, "If it is within a persons reach, they will use it!" Another solution I would like to bring to the drawing board is a patrol team. Our community could be just a couple of men to patrol our streets, even as a side job for a little extra money. They would make sure everyone is being a good citizen, and if they catch anyone littering, they should report it. This information then gets back to you guys, and that is where we have a community service team. Any one who is caught littering will be sentenced to a week of community service picking up other people's litter. I am positive after a week of hard core service, they will remember to use the recycle bin next time.

These three solutions will put a positive spin on our citizens and the littering problem. Our citizens will pitch in any extra time and money to keep Hometown clean. In doing this, we will be able to purchase the people and things necessary. These solutions should also eliminate or greatly decrease our littering issue. Now as a chain reaction, when we get our citizens to help, then our littering will decrease, and that is when our community shines. With the extra effort, our community will be spick and span along with happy citizens. With the purchase of trash cans, people don't have to walk as far and therefore don't have an excuse for littering. When they do litter, with my community service idea, they won't ever litter again. They will pay their consequences and realize how it feels to pick up other people's trash! Also, with our strict rules now, community service will keep the streets clean and now our citizens only have to walk to the corner instead of five streets.

Aftering realizing the affects of littering, it doesn't take a genius to figure out how my solutions are going to solve the problem. There are only to possible options as to where the trash is going to be. The litter will either be in the trash cans, or if not there then in the hands of a community service worker! Either way the litter goes, there is a garunteee it won't be on the streets! I don't know about you, but it sounds like a problem solved to me.

I know I am speaking not just for myself, but most people in Hometown. The problem of littering has taken over and run our community for too long! I just hope you understand where my thoughts and solutions are coming from, and look forward to a revision. Spending a little extra money on a big deal doesn't seem to out of reach. I say we save our town and put a stop to littering! Thank you for listening, and I look forward to a new, improved, and clean Hometown!

Sincere citizen,

L.

## Writing Applications

### Score Point 5

The following list describes a writing sample (shown on the next page) that earns a **Score Point 5** using the *ISTEP+* Writing Applications Rubric.

This sample

- fully accomplishes the task and addresses all specific points of the prompt (i.e., writes a persuasive letter that describes a solution to the problem of litter and provides reasons why this solution will solve the problem). However, the topic and details are not as fully developed as those typically found in a Score Point 6 paper.
- stays focused on the task and does not go off on tangents.
- includes many relevant ideas and supporting details (e.g., *They could put up billboards, post signs, produce radio & television commercials, ext. [etc.]; The town itself would become a much cleaner place [,] and it would become a nicer place to live and raise a family*).
- is organized logically and cohesively, with a clear introduction and conclusion.
- has fully developed paragraphs, clear topic sentences, and demonstrates effective transitions between ideas (e.g., *There are many specific reasons why my solution will solve the problem of littering; The other reason that this solution would work*).
- uses challenging vocabulary that is appropriate to the topic (e.g., *accomplished, practical, receptacles*).
- is easy to read; uses varied sentence patterns and complex sentences (e.g., *Littering is a problem that every city has, but we can at least help to keep our city as litter free as possible; If my solution was put to good use, the community would become closer [,] and the area would become cleaner*).
- exhibits strong writing technique (e.g., *The community body would have accomplished something together, which gives them a stronger feeling of being a close knit [close-knit] community; The community would be affected in many good ways with such a [with a] practical solution such as mine*).
- displays a sense of audience and appropriately adjusts language and tone to the task and reader (e.g., *I believe that if we could come up with some solution to keep the community looking clean, it would make this town a much better place to live*).

**NOTE:** A Score Point 5 paper may have many of the same characteristics found in a Score Point 6 paper. The difference is that a Score Point 5 paper is very good, while a Score Point 6 paper is exceptional.

## Language Conventions

### Score Point 4

The following list describes a writing sample (shown on the next page) that earns a **Score Point 4** using the *ISTEP+* Language Conventions Rubric.

This sample

- has mostly correct capitalization.
- has mostly correct punctuation.
- uses correct spelling, with some exceptions (e.g., *ext. [etc.], plee [plea]*).
- contains correct grammar and word usage, with some exceptions (e.g., *The community would be affected in many good ways with such a [with a] practical solution such as mine; laying [lying]*).
- uses paragraphs correctly.
- has no run-on sentences or sentence fragments.



## Persuasive Letter

To Whom It May Concern,

Driving around our community lately, I have realized that our neighborhoods have become quite the dump. Littering is a problem that every city has, but we can at least help to keep our city as litter free as possible. I believe that if we could come up with some solution to keep the community looking clean, it would make this town a much better place to live. Since the citizens' committee has been assigned this project, I will tell you about my idea to reduce the litter.

My solution to this problem is that the community advertise our need to clean up the litter. They could put up billboards, post signs, produce radio & television commercials, ext. These advertisements should look and sound fun. They should look like something a family, group of friends, or school might want to do. The town could plan special days that are meant to be spent cleaning up all the litter. If the activities and advertisements are fun and cool, more people would be willing to participate.

If my solution was put to good use, the community would become closer and the area would become cleaner. The community body would have accomplished something together, which gives them a stronger feeling of being a close knit community. The town itself would become a much cleaner place and it would become a nicer place to live and raise a family. Who wants to raise a family in a nasty, dirty, littered town? I know I don't! The community would be affected in many good ways with such a practical solution such as mine.

There are many specific reasons why my solution will solve the problem of littering. One of those is that people would throw their trash in the right receptacles and not litter because of the advertisements reminding them to throw their trash away. The other reason that this solution would work is because if everyone in the community would do their part and participate in clean-up days, there wouldn't be as much litter laying around everywhere.

I hope that the citizens' committee will take my solution into consideration. If they don't pick my solution, I hope the one they do pick keeps the community in "squeaky-clean" condition. Thank You for taking time to read my plea.

Sincerely,

A concerned citizen

## Writing Applications

### Score Point 4

The following list describes a writing sample (shown on the next page) that earns a **Score Point 4** using the *ISTEP+* Writing Applications Rubric.

This sample

- adequately accomplishes the task and addresses all points of the prompt (i.e., writes a persuasive letter that describes a solution to the problem of litter and provides reasons why this solution will solve the problem).
- stays focused on the task.
- provides some supporting details but does not do so as completely as a Score Point 6 or Score Point 5 paper (e.g., *First we should have a town meeting and talk about the importance of not littering; The first offense would be a verbal warning*).
- progresses in a logical order with the paragraphs indicating an adequate introduction, body, and conclusion; uses transitions between paragraphs and sentences (e.g., *After; The first offense; In conclusion*).
- demonstrates adequate vocabulary that is appropriate to the topic (e.g., *ecosystem, back up [backup] plan of action, offense, harsh*).
- is easy to read but is not as fluent as a Score Point 6 or Score Point 5 paper. The writer uses varied sentence patterns with some complex sentences (e.g., *After we have given the speech on how important it is to stop littering, I think we should also have a back up [backup] plan of action; If they get to the third offense [,] then they deserve this punishment*).
- displays a good sense of audience (e.g., *In conclusion, I believe my solution will solve the littering problem because of what the community will learn and the harsh punishments of [for] their actions*).

**NOTE:** A Score Point 4 paper represents a good performance. One factor that differentiates a Score Point 4 paper from Score Point 6 and Score Point 5 papers is the number of ideas and the development of these ideas.

## Language Conventions

### Score Point 4

The following list describes a writing sample (shown on the next page) that earns a **Score Point 4** using the *ISTEP+* Language Conventions Rubric.

This sample

- has correct capitalization.
- has correct punctuation, with some exceptions (e.g., *see's [sees], its [it's]*).
- has some spelling errors (e.g., *Comitee [Committee], alright [all right], something [something]*).
- has mostly correct grammar and word usage.
- has adequate paragraphing.
- has no run-on sentences or sentence fragments.

## Persuasive Letter

Dear Citizen's Comitee,

I have put thought into our problem with littering and I have come up with a solution. I think that the people in this community aren't taking things seriously. First we should have a town meeting and talk about the importance of not littering. We should talk about how the animals of our community are being affected, and not just ourselves. It's destroying our ecosystem, and eventually it will destroy the world.

After we have given the speech on how important it is to stop littering, I think we should also have a back up plan of action. What I mean by this is we should contact the police and ask them if it would be alright to have new laws in our community. The first offense would be a verbal warning. So if a cop see's anyone litter they will tell them to pick the trash up and throw it away. They would also remind them not to do it again and tell them what the second offense is. The second offense will be a fine, anywhere from twenty to five-hundred dollars. So it depends on what they litter. If its somthing that can really harm the community it will be around five-hundred dollars. But if it's something like a candy wrapper it might be about twenty dollars. The third offense will be community service. If they get to the third offense then they deserve this punishment. The fourth offense will be jail.

In conclusion, I believe my solution will solve the littering problem because of what the community will learn and the harsh punishments of their actions.

Sincerely,

C.

## Writing Applications

### Score Point 3

The following list describes a writing sample (shown on the next page) that earns a **Score Point 3** using the *ISTEP+* Writing Applications Rubric.

This sample

- minimally accomplishes the task (i.e., writes a persuasive letter that briefly describes a solution to the problem of litter and provides some reasons why this solution will solve the problem).
- stays focused on the topic.
- attempts to include some in-depth information and supporting details (e.g., *On every sunday* [Sunday,] *we will have trucks come by and take the trash cans to a ware house* [warehouse] *so the trash can be seperated* [separated], *and then they will bring them back*).
- attempts to organize ideas logically with an introduction, but includes few details in the body, and the conclusion is weak; uses few transitions.
- is easy to read.
- attempts some sentence variety (e.g., *There will be trash cans in front of every house, so if some one* [someone] *wants to throw away trash [,] they don't have to go very far*).
- displays some sense of audience (e.g., *I am writing this letter to tell you about my solution to the litter problem*).

**NOTE:** The word **minimal** is often associated with a Score Point 3 paper. A Score Point 3 paper, like a Score Point 4 paper, has a list-like quality. However, a Score Point 4 paper provides some details and in-depth information, while a Score Point 3 paper shows minimal development of ideas.

## Language Conventions

### Score Point 3

The following list describes a writing sample (shown on the next page) that earns a **Score Point 3** using the *ISTEP+* Language Conventions Rubric.

This sample

- has correct capitalization, with one exception (e.g., *sunday* [Sunday]).
- has mostly correct punctuation.
- has some spelling errors (e.g., *ware house* [warehouse], *seperated* [separated], *some one* [someone]).
- has mostly correct grammar and word usage.
- has adequate paragraphing.
- has no run-on sentences but has one sentence fragment (e.g., *Plus make a healthier community*).

## Persuasive Letter

Dear, Community

I am writing this letter to tell you about my solution to the litter problem.

I have decided to put one trash can in front of every house. On every Sunday we will have trucks come by and take the trash cans to a warehouse so the trash can be separated, and then they will bring them back.

This solution will help with the litter problem. It will reduce the trash. Plus make a healthier community.

There will be trash cans in front of every house, so if someone wants to throw away trash they don't have to go very far.

## Writing Applications

### Score Point 2

The following list describes a writing sample (shown on the next page) that earns a **Score Point 2** using the *ISTEP+* Writing Applications Rubric.

This sample

- minimally accomplishes the task (i.e., writes a persuasive letter that briefly describes a solution to the problem of litter but does not provide adequate support).
- exhibits some focus (e.g., *Litering* [Littering] *has become a huge problem in todays* [today's] *society*).
- provides few supporting details (e.g., *If we can just throw away our garbage in trash cans*).
- attempts to organize ideas logically, with introductory and concluding sentences.
- attempts some challenging vocabulary (e.g., *society*, *environment*).
- demonstrates minimal word usage and writing technique.
- displays some sense of audience (e.g., *That's why if we throw our trash away [,] litering* [littering] *will stop*).

**NOTE:** On the positive side, a Score Point 2 paper communicates some ideas. However, the overall lack of writing skills limits the writer's ability to communicate these ideas effectively.

## Language Conventions

### Score Point 2

The following list describes a writing sample (shown on the next page) that earns a **Score Point 2** using the *ISTEP+* Language Conventions Rubric.

This sample

- has correct capitalization.
- has errors in punctuation (e.g., *todays* [today's]; *That's why if we throw our trash away [,] litering* [littering] *will stop*).
- has spelling errors (e.g., *Litering* [Littering], *polution* [pollution]).
- has word usage errors (e.g., *With all this trash is not good for the environment* [All this trash is not good for the environment]; *And there would [be] no polution* [pollution] *in the air*).
- consists of three short paragraphs.
- has no run-on sentences but has one sentence fragment (e.g., *If we can just throw away our garbage in trash cans*).
- has frequent errors in a relatively brief writing sample.

### **Persuasive Letter**

Dear, Citizens' Committee

Litering has become a huge problem in todays society. With all this trash is not good for the environment.

If we can just throw away our garbage in trash cans. It would make the would a better place to live. And there would no polution in the air.

That's why if we throw our trash away litering will stop.

## Writing Applications

### Score Point 1

The following list describes a writing sample (shown below) that earns a **Score Point 1** using the *ISTEP+* Writing Applications Rubric.

This sample

- does not accomplish the task (i.e., briefly mentions that businesses should have recycling options).
- has little focus.
- provides very few relevant ideas and less than minimal development (i.e., has no introduction, conclusion, or use of transitions).
- is too brief to establish an order.
- has little control of vocabulary and exhibits minimal word usage.
- demonstrates less than minimal writing technique.

**NOTE:** Although Score Point 1 is the lowest score point, the paper attempts some meaning. At this level, problems in sentence structure may limit the writer's ability to communicate ideas.

## Language Conventions

### Score Point 1

The following list describes a writing sample (shown below) that earns a **Score Point 1** using the *ISTEP+* Language Conventions Rubric.

This sample

- has correct capitalization.
- has correct punctuation.
- contains spelling errors of basic words (e.g., *somplace* [someplace], *recicly* [recycle], *restoronts* [restaurants], *evry* [every]).
- has no paragraphing.
- has no run-on sentences or sentence fragments.
- has many errors in a very brief sample of writing.

**NOTE:** The variety and proportion of errors in relation to the length of the writing sample are considered. A very brief paper consisting of two or three sentences may receive no more than 2 score points.

### Persuasive Letter

There should be somplace to recicly in restoronts, fast food jointns, and stores. And  
there should be recycle binds right beside evry trash can.



## INTRODUCTION TO READING/WRITING TASKS

The second component of the applied skills section of *ISTEP+* at Grades 4 through 10 is a reading/writing task. The reading/writing task allows the students to demonstrate their understanding and comprehension of narrative or informational text. The reading/writing task consists of one or two passages of text, multiple-choice questions, open-ended questions, and one extended-response question. Because this is a reading comprehension test, all the information students need in order to answer the questions correctly is in the text. All responses should be based on information from the text.

Rubrics are used to score the open-ended applied skills questions. **The rubrics describe the levels of performance and ensure that the responses are scored fairly and objectively.** There are three kinds of rubrics used to score the reading/writing tasks.

- **Reading Comprehension**

Reading Comprehension Rubrics are used to score the open-ended questions and extended-response question. Each rubric contains a list of acceptable responses (exemplars) as well as a description of the level of performance for each score point. Students may receive a maximum of two points.

- **Writing Applications**

The extended-response question at the end of the reading/writing task is the only question in the reading/writing task that is scored for Writing Applications. The Extended Response Writing Applications Rubric is based on the Writing Applications Rubric used to score the writing prompt. It assesses how well the students organize and communicate their thoughts in writing. Students may receive a maximum of four points.

- **Language Conventions**

The extended-response question at the end of the reading/writing task is the only question in the reading/writing task that is scored for Language Conventions. The Language Conventions Rubric assesses how well the students use language conventions such as paragraphing, grammar, word usage, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Students may receive a maximum of four points.

## **INTRODUCTION TO READING/WRITING TASKS (cont.)**

The following pages show the multiple-choice questions, the open-ended questions, and the extended-response question. For the multiple-choice questions, the correct response is indicated. Sample responses, exemplars, and rubrics accompany each open-ended question. The Reading Comprehension exemplars provided for all questions are not necessarily the only correct responses possible. In many cases, other relevant responses may be accepted. Each sample response is accompanied by an explanation of the score point it received. The open-ended questions are scored only for Reading Comprehension; however, the extended-response question is scored for Writing Applications and Language Conventions in addition to Reading Comprehension.

All questions used in the reading/writing task are based on the skills outlined in the Indiana Academic Standards through Grade 8 on page 7 of this guide. Teachers are encouraged to discuss both the Indiana Academic Standards and the examples given in this guide with students and parents. Teachers may also use these examples and similar questions to teach students strategies that will help them become more efficient readers, locate information in a text, and support an opinion with information from the text.

## Test 6: English/Language Arts

For Test 6, you will read an article and an excerpt from a fictional story. You will answer questions based on each passage. Then you will write an essay on a related topic.

Have you ever looked at a large structure, such as a tall building or a long bridge, and wondered just what it took to build it? First you will read “Built on Thin Air!” an article that describes a surprising kind of architecture.

Now read “Built on Thin Air!” and do Numbers 1 through 6. You may look back at the article as often as you like.

### Pre-Reading

The reading passages are preceded by an introduction that helps the student to focus on the upcoming task.

Following the introduction, the student reads “Built on Thin Air!” and “The Herring Choker.” A copy of these passages accompanies the student’s responses to the applied skills section.

### Test 6—Question 1

#### READING: Word Recognition, Fluency, and Vocabulary Development

**1** The article states that “tomorrow’s biggest structures might be built on thin air.” Which of these BEST explains what the author means by “built on thin air”?

- ☐ Most pneumatic structures will be constructed in outer space.
- ☐ The pneumatic structures also supply oxygen for people to breathe.
- ☐ Air lower in oxygen content works best on pneumatic structures.
- ☒ Air will supply the main support in pneumatic structures.

**Test 6—Question 2**  
**READING: Comprehension**

**2** According to the article, what are TWO different advantages of using pneumatic structures instead of more traditional structures that are built out of steel and concrete?

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Exemplars:**

- Pneumatic structures are lighter than steel and concrete structures.
- Pneumatic structures are cheaper to build than steel and concrete structures.
- Pneumatic structures can be portable, unlike steel and concrete structures.
- Pneumatic structures are ideal for use in outer space, unlike steel and concrete structures.
- Pneumatic structures can often build themselves, unlike steel and concrete structures.
- Pneumatic structures can often be built much faster than steel and concrete structures.
- other relevant text-based response

**Rubric:**

- 2 points** versions of two exemplars
- 1 point** version of one exemplar
- 0 points** other

**SCORE POINT 2**

- 2** According to the article, what are TWO different advantages of using pneumatic structures instead of more traditional structures that are built out of steel and concrete?

- 1) The pneumatic structures build themselves.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2) It is lower in cost.  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Test 6—Question 2  
Score Point 2**

The first part of the response is a version of the fifth exemplar. The second part of the response is a version of the second exemplar. The total response receives full credit for a Score Point 2.

**SCORE POINT 1**

- 2** According to the article, what are TWO different advantages of using pneumatic structures instead of more traditional structures that are built out of steel and concrete?

- 1) it is easier  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2) it doesn't cost as much  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Test 6—Question 2  
Score Point 1**

The first part of the response is too vague. The second part of the response is a version of the second exemplar. Therefore, this response receives a Score Point 1.

**SCORE POINT 0**

- 2** According to the article, what are TWO different advantages of using pneumatic structures instead of more traditional structures that are built out of steel and concrete?

- 1) The air might go out  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Someone might release the air  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Test 6—Question 2  
Score Point 0**

The response for both parts is incorrect. Therefore, this response receives a Score Point 0.

**NOTE:** The responses to Numbers 2, 5, 10, and 11 (the open-ended questions) do not have to be written in complete sentences to receive credit. Errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar are also not considered when scoring these responses.

**Test 6—Question 3**  
READING: Comprehension

- 3** What is the BEST summary of Paragraphs 7 and 8?
- ☐ They explain why air stadiums must be strapped down.
  - ☐ They demonstrate the large size of pneumatic architecture structures.
  - ☒ They explain how air can support large, inflatable structures.
  - ☐ They illustrate why punctures in large, inflatable structures are easy to fix.

**Test 6—Question 4**  
READING: Comprehension

- 4** In “Build It!” the point of the experiment would be lost if you
- ☒ hang the weight from a ruler instead of from a long balloon
  - ☐ use a ribbon instead of string for hanging the weight
  - ☐ support the bridge between two chair backs of equal height
  - ☐ replace the nails with a bag of coins as the weight

**Test 6—Question 5**  
**READING: Comprehension**

**5** What are TWO differences between the information in the section “Build It!” and the information in the rest of the article “Built on Thin Air!”?

1) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Exemplars:**

“Build It!”

- uses an experiment to show how they work/  
gives readers a way to test how they work
- bridging structures
- relies on graphics
- other relevant text-based response

“Built on Thin Air!”

- talks/tells about how they work
- provides examples of structures/mostly  
buildings
- uses text only
- other relevant text-based response

**Rubric:**

- 2 points** versions of two exemplars
- 1 point** version of one exemplar
- 0 points** other

**Test 6—Question 5  
Score Point 2**

The first part of the response is a version of the first “Build It!” exemplar. The second part of the response is a version of the second “Built on Thin Air!” exemplar. The total response receives full credit for a Score Point 2.

SCORE POINT 2	
<b>5</b>	What are TWO differences between the information in the section “Build It!” and the information in the rest of the article “Built on Thin Air!”? 1) <u>“Built on Thin Air” gives real-life examples, while “Build It” only does an experiment.</u> 2) <u>“Built on Thin Air” talks about inflated buildings while “Build It” talks about inflated bridges.</u>

**Test 6—Question 5  
Score Point 1**

The first part of the response is a version of the first “Build It!” exemplar. The second part of the response does not provide a comparison. Therefore, this response receives a Score Point 1.

SCORE POINT 1	
<b>5</b>	What are TWO differences between the information in the section “Build It!” and the information in the rest of the article “Built on Thin Air!”? 1) <u>Build It! was an experiment unlike Built on Thin Air!.</u> 2) <u>Built on Thin Air! explained how pneumatic architecture worked.</u>

**Test 6—Question 5  
Score Point 0**

The response for both parts is incorrect. Therefore, this response receives a Score Point 0.

SCORE POINT 0	
<b>5</b>	What are TWO differences between the information in the section “Build It!” and the information in the rest of the article “Built on Thin Air!”? 1) <u>“Build It” uses terminology like compression and tension instead of just saying pressure.</u> 2) <u>“Build It” uses parenthesis to provide definitions for vocabulary instead of metric conversions.</u>



**Test 6—Question 6**  
**READING: Comprehension**

- 6** Which of these techniques does the author use to support his position on pneumatic structures?
- ☐ He quotes scientific experts.
  - ☐ He interviews people at the RCA “Hoosier” Dome.
  - ☐ He conducts tests at the Marshall Space Flight Center.
  - ☒ He provides statistics about their strength and lightness.

**Test 6—Question 7**  
**READING: Literary Response and Analysis**

- 7** Which of these is a MAIN theme of the story?
- ☐ a person’s conflict with society
  - ☒ the conflict between humans and the natural world
  - ☐ a person’s conflict with his or her own feelings
  - ☐ the conflict between two people

**Test 6—Question 8****READING: Word Recognition, Fluency, and Vocabulary Development**

- 8** In the story, the herring fishermen refer to themselves as “herring chokers” because
- ☐ the nets sometimes become choked with too many herring
  - ☐ the herring often stop breathing when the net is pulled into the boat
  - ☐ it is difficult to remove the herring from the net before they stop breathing
  - ☒ it looks as if the herring are being choked when they are pulled from the net

**Test 6—Question 9****READING: Literary Response and Analysis**

- 9** According to the story, which of these does the narrator suggest was the biggest obstacle the pair faced while fishing?
- ☒ The boat motor stops working.
  - ☐ They carry no life jackets.
  - ☐ The shore is half a mile away.
  - ☐ They leave a net unattended.

### Test 6—Question 10

#### READING: Word Recognition, Fluency, and Vocabulary Development

**10** Read this sentence from the story.

**We were only two miles out, but the shoreline looked to me to be as far away as the moon.**

According to information in the story, what emotion is Karl MOST LIKELY feeling when he uses the phrase “as far away as the moon”?

---

Why does the shore seem so far away?

---

---

#### Exemplars:

Emotion Karl is feeling

- Karl is probably fearful/afraid that they are not going to reach shore.
- Karl is feeling hopelessness/despair.
- other relevant text-based response

Meaning

- It means that Karl thinks the distance to shore seems farther than it really is because of the storm’s fury./The shore seems to be impossibly far away although Karl knows it isn’t.
- other relevant text-based response

#### Rubric:

- |                 |                            |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| <b>2 points</b> | versions of both exemplars |
| <b>1 point</b>  | version of either exemplar |
| <b>0 points</b> | other                      |

**Test 6—Question 10**  
**Score Point 2**

The first part of the response is a version of the second exemplar for "Emotion Karl is feeling." The second part of the response is a version of the first exemplar for "Meaning." The total response receives full credit for a Score Point 2.

**SCORE POINT 2**

**10** Read this sentence from the story.

**We were only two miles out, but the shoreline looked to me to be as far away as the moon.**

According to information in the story, what emotion is Karl MOST LIKELY feeling when he uses the phrase "as far away as the moon"?

He is exaggerating because he feels hopeless.

Why does the shore seem so far away?

They only have a small amount of time to get there before the storm catches up to them.

**Test 6—Question 10**  
**Score Point 1**

The first part of the response for "Emotion Karl is feeling" is incorrect. The second part of the response is a version of the first exemplar for "Meaning." Therefore, this response receives a Score Point 1.

**SCORE POINT 1**

**10** Read this sentence from the story.

**We were only two miles out, but the shoreline looked to me to be as far away as the moon.**

According to information in the story, what emotion is Karl MOST LIKELY feeling when he uses the phrase "as far away as the moon"?

That it was too far for them to make it.

Why does the shore seem so far away?

Because the weather is so horrible and Karl knows it will be hard to get to land.

**SCORE POINT 0**

**10** Read this sentence from the story.

**We were only two miles out, but the shoreline looked to me to be as far away as the moon.**

According to information in the story, what emotion is Karl MOST LIKELY feeling when he uses the phrase “as far away as the moon”?

Karl thinks the shore line is really far away.

Why does the shore seem so far away?

They are two miles away from the shore and that is far.

**Test 6—Question 10  
Score Point 0**

The response does not provide a correct response for either “Emotion Karl is feeling” or “Meaning.” Therefore, this response receives a Score Point 0.

**Test 6—Question 11**  
**READING: Literary Response and Analysis**

**11** During the storm in “The Herring Choker,” what mood do the narrator’s words and details create?

---

Give TWO different examples from the story that show how the narrator creates this mood.

1) \_\_\_\_\_

---

2) \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Exemplars:**

Mood

- fear/uncertainty/danger
- other relevant text-based response

Examples

- “Then he looked at the western sky, and his smile faded. They are called Northwesters.”
- “We were only two miles out, but the shoreline looked to me to be as far away as the moon.”
- “The spray was icy cold, needles against my face.”
- “The wind pushed hard against us. We seemed to be fighting the anger of the whole lake.”
- other relevant text-based response

**Rubric:**

- |                 |                                           |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <b>2 points</b> | version of mood exemplar and two examples |
| <b>1 point</b>  | version of mood exemplar and one example  |
| <b>0 points</b> | other                                     |

### SCORE POINT 2

- 11** During the storm in “The Herring Choker,” what mood do the narrator’s words and details create?

a frightening mood.

Give TWO different examples from the story that show how the narrator creates this mood.

- 1) When he says his father looked to the sky and his smile faded.
- 2) When the author said the shore line look as far away as the moon

### Test 6—Question 11 Score Point 2

The first part of the response is a version of the first exemplar for “Mood.” The second part of the response includes versions of the first and second exemplars for “Examples.” The total response receives full credit for a Score Point 2.

### SCORE POINT 1

- 11** During the storm in “The Herring Choker,” what mood do the narrator’s words and details create?

They create a very anxious mood.

Give TWO different examples from the story that show how the narrator creates this mood.

- 1) They narrator gives very specific details of whats going on.
- 2) They narrator also says how the smile wipes off his Dad’s face.

### Test 6—Question 11 Score Point 1

The first part of the response is a version of the first exemplar for “Mood.” The second part of the response provides one incorrect response and a version of the first exemplar for “Examples.” The second part of the response provides only one example. Therefore, this response receives a Score Point 1.

**Test 6—Question 11**  
**Score Point 0**

The first part of the response is a version of the first exemplar for “Mood.” The second part of the response is incorrect. Therefore, this response receives a Score Point 0.

**SCORE POINT 0**

**11** During the storm in “The Herring Choker,” what mood do the narrator’s words and details create?

Scary

Give TWO different examples from the story that show how the narrator creates this mood.

1) Scary

2) happy



**Test 6—Question 12**  
**READING: Comprehension**

**12** Choose the BEST summary of “The Herring Choker.”

- ☐ Two fishermen catch some fish and have to row home after the boat’s motor breaks down.
- ☐ A father needs his son’s help to catch herring and row their boat home.
- ☐ A son learns that catching herring is hard and tedious work, but he receives his father’s approval for a job well done.
- ☒ A son helps his injured father net herring, and then they help each other reach home safely in a storm.

### Test 6—Question 13

READING: Comprehension

WRITING: Applications/Written English Language Conventions



**13**

One of the themes in “The Herring Choker” is overcoming difficult circumstances. Write an essay in which you explain how Karl faces such circumstances and how these experiences change how he feels about himself. **In your essay, be sure to include at least TWO examples from “The Herring Choker” of difficulties Karl faces and an explanation of how these experiences change him.**

You may use the space below to plan your writing. Only your writing on the lined pages in this book will be scored. Using the Editing Checklist on page 112, check your writing for correct paragraphing, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and the use of Standard English. **Remember, your essay should be well organized and have an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.**

**NOTE:** The page reference above for the Editing Checklist refers to its location in the actual test book.

## Extended Response Writing Applications Overview Grades 6–12

Score	Does the writing sample
<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fully accomplish the task?</li> <li>• include many relevant ideas?</li> <li>• organize ideas logically?</li> <li>• exhibit very good word usage?</li> <li>• demonstrate very good writing technique?</li> <li>• demonstrate effective adjustment of language and tone to task and reader?</li> </ul>
Score	Does the writing sample
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• accomplish the task?</li> <li>• include relevant ideas?</li> <li>• organize ideas logically?</li> <li>• exhibit good word usage?</li> <li>• demonstrate good writing technique?</li> <li>• demonstrate an attempt to adjust language and tone to task and reader?</li> </ul>
Score	Does the writing sample
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• minimally accomplish the task?</li> <li>• include some relevant ideas?</li> <li>• exhibit an attempt to organize ideas logically?</li> <li>• exhibit ordinary word usage?</li> <li>• demonstrate adequate writing technique?</li> <li>• demonstrate an attempt to adjust language and tone to task and reader?</li> </ul>
Score	Does the writing sample
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• only partially accomplish or fail to accomplish the task?</li> <li>• include few relevant ideas?</li> <li>• exhibit a minimal attempt to organize ideas logically?</li> <li>• exhibit minimal word usage?</li> <li>• demonstrate minimal or less than minimal writing technique?</li> <li>• demonstrate language and tone that may be inappropriate to task and reader?</li> </ul>

**NOTE:** This chart is only a brief summary of the score points. It is not appropriate to use this summary as the sole tool in scoring student papers. The more in-depth Extended Response Writing Applications Rubric is used for the actual scoring of *ISTEP+* student papers.

These scoring rubrics are used for students tested on the fall *ISTEP+* assessment in Grades 6–12.

## Extended Response Writing Applications Rubric Grades 6–12

<b>SCORE POINT 4</b>
<b>A Score Point 4 paper represents a solid performance. It fully accomplishes the task.</b>
<b>Ideas and Content</b>
<p><b>Does the writing sample fully accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• present a unifying theme or main idea without going off on tangents?</li> <li>• stay focused on topic and task?</li> </ul> <p><b>Does the writing sample include many relevant ideas? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide ample information and more than adequate supporting details that are developed?</li> <li>• explore many facets of the topic?</li> </ul>
<b>Organization</b>
<p><b>Are the ideas in the writing sample organized logically? Does the writing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• present a meaningful, cohesive whole with a beginning, a middle, and an end (i.e., include a solid introduction and conclusion)?</li> <li>• progress in an order that enhances meaning of text?</li> <li>• include smooth transitions (e.g., use topic sentences) between sentences and paragraphs to enhance meaning of text? (Writing may have an occasional lapse.)</li> </ul>
<b>Style</b>
<p><b>Does the writing sample exhibit very good word usage? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• include vocabulary to make explanations detailed and precise, descriptions rich, and actions clear and vivid?</li> <li>• demonstrate control of vocabulary?</li> </ul> <p><b>Does the writing sample demonstrate very good writing technique?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the writing very fluent?</li> <li>• Does it include varied sentence patterns, including complex sentences?</li> <li>• Does it demonstrate use of writer's techniques (e.g., literary conventions such as imagery and dialogue and/or literary genres such as humor and suspense)?</li> </ul>
<b>Voice</b>
<p><b>Does the writing sample demonstrate effective adjustment of language and tone to task and reader? Does it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exhibit appropriate register (e.g., formal, personal, or dialect) to suit task?</li> <li>• demonstrate a sense of audience?</li> <li>• exhibit an original perspective (e.g., authoritative, lively, and/or exciting)?</li> </ul>

**NOTE:** These scoring rubrics are used for students tested on the fall *ISTEP+* assessment in Grades 6–12.

## Extended Response Writing Applications Rubric Grades 6–12

### SCORE POINT 3

A Score Point 3 paper represents a good performance. It accomplishes the task, but generally needs to exhibit more development, better organization, or a more sophisticated writing style to receive a higher score.

#### Ideas and Content

**Does the writing sample accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)? Does it**

- present a unifying theme or main idea? (Writing may include minor tangents.)
- stay mostly focused on topic and task?

**Does the writing sample include relevant ideas? Does it**

- include sufficient information and supporting details? (Details may not be fully developed; ideas may be listed.)
- explore some facets of the topic?

#### Organization

**Are the ideas in the writing sample organized logically? Does the writing**

- present a meaningful whole with a beginning, a middle, and an end despite an occasional lapse (e.g., a weak introduction or conclusion)?
- generally progress in an order that enhances meaning of text?
- include transitions between sentences and paragraphs to enhance meaning of text? (Transitions may be rough, although some topic sentences are included.)

#### Style

**Does the writing sample exhibit good word usage? Does it**

- include vocabulary that is appropriately chosen, with words that clearly convey the writer's meaning?
- demonstrate control of basic vocabulary?

**Does the writing sample demonstrate good writing technique?**

- Is the writing fluent?
- Does it exhibit some varied sentence patterns, including some complex sentences?
- Does it demonstrate an attempt to use writer's techniques (e.g., literary conventions such as imagery and dialogue and/or literary genres such as humor and suspense)?

#### Voice

**Does the writing sample demonstrate an attempt to adjust language and tone to task and reader? Does it**

- generally exhibit appropriate register (e.g., formal, personal, or dialect) to suit task? (The writing may occasionally slip out of register.)
- demonstrate some sense of audience?
- attempt an original perspective?

**NOTE:** These scoring rubrics are used for students tested on the fall *ISTEP+* assessment in Grades 6–12.

## Extended Response Writing Applications Rubric Grades 6–12

<b>SCORE POINT 2</b>
<p>A Score Point 2 paper represents a performance that minimally accomplishes the task. Some elements of development, organization, and writing style are weak.</p>
<p><b>Ideas and Content</b></p> <p>Does the writing sample minimally accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attempt a unifying theme or main idea?</li> <li>• stay somewhat focused on topic and task?</li> </ul> <p>Does the writing sample include some relevant ideas? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• include some information with only a few details, or list ideas without supporting details?</li> <li>• explore some facets of the topic?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Organization</b></p> <p>Is there an attempt to logically organize ideas in the writing sample? Does the writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a beginning, a middle, or an end that may be weak or absent?</li> <li>• demonstrate an attempt to progress in an order that enhances meaning? (Progression of text may sometimes be unclear or out of order.)</li> <li>• demonstrate an attempt to include transitions? (Are some topic sentences used? Are transitions between sentences and paragraphs weak or absent?)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Style</b></p> <p>Does the writing sample exhibit ordinary word usage? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contain basic vocabulary, with words that are predictable and common?</li> <li>• demonstrate some control of vocabulary?</li> </ul> <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate adequate writing technique?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the writing generally fluent?</li> <li>• Does it contain mostly simple sentences (although there may be an attempt at more varied sentence patterns)?</li> <li>• Is it generally ordinary and predictable?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Voice</b></p> <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate an attempt to adjust language and tone to task and reader? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate a difficulty in establishing a register (e.g., formal, personal, or dialect)?</li> <li>• demonstrate little sense of audience?</li> <li>• generally lack an original perspective?</li> </ul>

**NOTE:** These scoring rubrics are used for students tested on the fall *ISTEP+* assessment in Grades 6–12.

## Extended Response Writing Applications Rubric Grades 6–12

### SCORE POINT 1

A Score Point 1 paper represents a performance that only partially accomplishes or fails to accomplish the task. Some responses may exhibit difficulty maintaining a focus. Others may be too brief to provide sufficient development of the topic or evidence of adequate organizational or writing style.

#### Ideas and Content

**Does the writing sample only partially accomplish or fail to accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)?**

- Writing may attempt a main idea, or the main idea may be difficult to discern.
- Does the writing sometimes lose focus or ineffectively establish focus?

**Does the writing sample include few relevant ideas?**

- Does the writing sample include little information and few or no details?
- Writing may explore only one or two facets of the topic.

#### Organization

**Is there a minimal attempt to logically organize ideas in the writing sample?**

- Does the writing have only one or two of the three elements: beginning, middle, and end?
- Is the writing sometimes difficult to follow? (Progression of text may be confusing, unclear, or difficult to discern.)
- Are transitions weak or absent (e.g., few or no topic sentences)?

#### Style

**Does the writing sample exhibit minimal word usage? Does it**

- contain limited vocabulary? (Words may be used incorrectly.)
- demonstrate minimal or less than minimal control of vocabulary?

**Does the writing sample demonstrate minimal or less than minimal writing technique?**

- Does the writing exhibit some or little fluency?
- Does it rely mostly on simple sentences or demonstrate problems with sentence patterns?
- Is it often repetitive, predictable, or dull?

#### Voice

**Does the writing sample demonstrate language and tone that may be inappropriate to task and reader? Does it**

- demonstrate use of a register inappropriate to the task (e.g., slang or dialect in a formal setting)?
- demonstrate little or no sense of audience?
- lack an original perspective?

**NOTE:** These scoring rubrics are used for students tested on the fall *ISTEP+* assessment in Grades 6–12.

## Language Conventions Rubric Grades 9–12

In their writing, students will apply the Standard English conventions defined in the Indiana Academic Standards for their grade and all previous grades.

Score	Does the writing sample exhibit a superior command of language skills?
<b>4</b>	<p>A Score Point 4 paper exhibits a superior command of written English language conventions. The paper provides evidence that the student has a thorough control of the concepts outlined in the Indiana Academic Standards associated with the student's grade level. In a Score Point 4 paper, there are no errors that impair the flow of communication. Errors are generally of the first-draft variety or occur when the student attempts sophisticated sentence construction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a superior command of capitalization conventions?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a superior command of the mechanics of punctuation?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a superior command of grade-level-appropriate spelling?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a superior command of grammar and Standard English usage?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a superior command of paragraphing?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a superior command of sentence structure by not using run-on sentences or sentence fragments?</li> </ul>
Score	Does the writing sample exhibit a good control of language skills?
<b>3</b>	<p>In a Score Point 3 paper, errors are occasional and are often of the first-draft variety; they have a minor impact on the flow of communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a good control of capitalization conventions?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a good control of the mechanics of punctuation?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a good control of grade-level-appropriate spelling?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a good control of grammar and Standard English usage?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a good control of paragraphing?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a good control of sentence structure by only occasionally using run-on sentences or sentence fragments?</li> </ul>
Score	Does the writing sample exhibit a fair control of language skills?
<b>2</b>	<p>In a Score Point 2 paper, errors are typically frequent and may occasionally impede the flow of communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a fair control of capitalization conventions?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a fair control of the mechanics of punctuation?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a fair control of grade-level-appropriate spelling?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a fair control of grammar and Standard English usage?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a fair control of paragraphing?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a fair control of sentence structure by frequently using run-on sentences or sentence fragments?</li> </ul>
Score	Does the writing sample exhibit a minimal or less than minimal control of language skills?
<b>1</b>	<p>In a Score Point 1 paper, errors are serious and numerous. The reader may need to stop and reread part of the sample and may struggle to discern the writer's meaning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a minimal control of capitalization conventions?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a minimal control of the mechanics of punctuation?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a minimal control of grade-level-appropriate spelling?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a minimal control of grammar and Standard English usage?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a minimal control of paragraphing?</li> <li>• Does the writing sample demonstrate a minimal control of sentence structure by using many run-on sentences or sentence fragments?</li> </ul>

**NOTE:** The elements of this rubric are applied holistically; no element is intended to supersede any other element. The variety and proportion of errors in relation to the length of the writing sample are considered. A very brief paper consisting of two or three sentences may receive no more than 2 score points.



## Reading Comprehension Rubric

SCORED FOR READING	
Reading Comprehension Exemplars:	
<p>Difficult circumstances overcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He has to learn to clean and set the nets.</li> <li>• He has to get back to shore (obstacles: storm/motor dying).</li> <li>• He has to extend his physical limitations (cold/tired/muscles aching).</li> <li>• He has to work extremely hard.</li> <li>• other relevant text-based response</li> </ul> <p>How the experiences change him</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Karl "feels like a herring choker"/like an adult/as if he really did help his father.</li> <li>• Karl's self-confidence has increased./He was proud of himself.</li> <li>• Karl learned to never give up.</li> <li>• other relevant text-based response</li> </ul>	
Reading Comprehension Rubric:	
Score	
<b>2</b>	response includes two difficult circumstances and an explanation
Score	
<b>1</b>	response includes one difficult circumstance and an explanation or two difficult circumstances and no explanation
Score	
<b>0</b>	other

## Extended Response Writing Applications

### Score Point 4

The following list describes a writing sample (shown on the next page) that earns a **Score Point 4** using the *ISTEP+* Extended Response Writing Applications Rubric.

This sample

- fully accomplishes the task and provides a thorough, developed response (i.e., writes an essay that describes the difficulties Karl faces and explains how the experiences changed him).
- presents a variety of detailed and specific information (e.g., *The first difficulty on the fishing trip was untangling the herring from the fishing net. The water is very cold, and even though Karl has insulated gloves, his hands go numb, and he is very uncomfortable.*
- organizes ideas logically, with a strong introduction, body, and conclusion.
- demonstrates a good command of word usage and vocabulary (e.g., *While his father is guiding the boat, Karl is working hard to bail the water out of the boat so they don't sink.*
- is fluent and easy to read; uses transitions and varied sentence structures, including complex sentences (e.g., *In "The Herring Choker," Karl faces many difficult circumstances while he is on his first fishing trip with his father; To make matters worse, the motor on the fishing boat suddenly gives out during the storm.*
- establishes a strong sense of audience (e.g., *By the end of the story, Karl is much more mature, and he has a deeper respect for his father and the other herring chokers.*

## Extended Response Language Conventions

### Score Point 4

The following list describes a writing sample (shown on the next page) that earns a **Score Point 4** using the *ISTEP+* Language Conventions Rubric.

This sample

- has correct capitalization.
- has correct punctuation.
- has correct spelling.
- has minor errors in grammar and word usage (e.g., *Karl and his [father] see the storm; Neither Karl or [nor] his father; It is gruelling that makes [It is so gruelling that it makes] Karl's arms burn*), which may be the result of first-draft errors.\*
- uses paragraphs correctly.
- has no run-on sentences or sentence fragments.

\*First-draft errors are those errors that have most likely been made because the student was writing quickly or did not have time to check his or her work. An error is considered to be of the first-draft variety if the student has not repeated the error or made similar errors elsewhere in the response.

## Essay

In "The Herring Choker," Karl faces many difficult circumstances while he is on his first fishing trip with his father. He overcomes these difficulties, however, and grows in the process.

The first difficulty on the fishing trip was untangling the herring from the fishing net. The water is very cold, and even though Karl has insulated gloves, his hands go numb, and he is very uncomfortable.

After pulling up the second net of herring, Karl and his see the storm coming toward them. They try to reach land before the storm hits, but are not successful. While his father is guiding the boat, Karl is working hard to bail the water out of the boat so they don't sink. Neither Karl or his father are wearing a life jacket, and the water is cold enough to kill them even if they don't drown.

To make matters worse, the motor on the fishing boat suddenly gives out during the storm. Karl and his father are forced to row back to land. It is gruelling that makes Karl's arms burn, but he and his father eventually make it home.

Karl's experiences on the fishing trip help him to grow and to see himself in a different light. After overcoming all of those difficulties, Karl is much more confident and sure of himself. He has gained his father's respect, also, which is very meaningful to him. Lastly, Karl has a new understanding of how tedious and difficult the work that his father does every day is. By the end of the story, Karl is much more mature, and he has a deeper respect for his father and the other herring chokers.

### Reading Comprehension

#### Score Point 2

The response (shown above) includes a version of the first "Difficult circumstances overcome" exemplar (e.g., *untangling the herring from the fishing net*), a version of the fourth "Difficult circumstances overcome" exemplar (e.g., *Karl and his father are forced to row back to land*), a version of the third "Difficult circumstances overcome" exemplar (e.g., *Karl's arms burn, but he and his father eventually make it home*) and includes a version of the second "How the experiences change him" exemplar (e.g., *Karl is much more confident and sure of himself*). The response provides three different circumstances from the story and an explanation of how Karl changed from these circumstances. Therefore, this response receives a Score Point 2.

**NOTE:** While this response includes versions of several exemplars, versions of only two exemplars and one explanation are required to earn a Score Point 2 for reading comprehension.

## Extended Response Writing Applications

### Score Point 3

The following list describes a writing sample (shown on the next page) that earns a **Score Point 3** using the *ISTEP+* Extended Response Writing Applications Rubric.

This sample

- accomplishes the task by addressing the specific points of the prompt, but the response is not as fully developed as in a Score Point 4 paper (i.e., writes an essay that describes the difficulties Karl faces and explains how the experiences changed him).
- includes some supporting details (e.g., *He had to overcome all of the tiredness and weakness [weakness] to make it to shore*).
- is organized logically; has an adequate introduction, body, and conclusion.
- exhibits adequate control of vocabulary and word usage (e.g., *He thought it was going to be really easy [,] but he was wrong*).
- is easy to read; uses some varied sentence structures, including complex sentences (e.g., *In the story "The Herring Choker [,]" Karl is a young boy who is trying to learn how to catch Herring [herring]*).
- has some sense of audience (e.g., *Just imagine being tired, cold, weak, and scared and rowing a boat home so you will live*).

## Extended Response Language Conventions

### Score Point 3

The following list describes a writing sample (shown on the next page) that earns a **Score Point 3** using the *ISTEP+* Language Conventions Rubric.

This sample

- has correct capitalization, with one exception (e.g., *Herring* [herring]).
- has mostly correct punctuation.
- has some spelling errors (e.g., *alot* [a lot], *weekness* [weakness], *approve/* [approval], *anyting* [anything]).
- has correct grammar and word usage.
- uses paragraphs correctly.
- has no run-on sentences or sentence fragments.

### Essay

In the story "The Herring Choker" Karl is a young boy who is trying to learn how to catch Herring. He thought it was going to be really easy but he was wrong. He had to work very hard and use a lot of energy.

He had to overcome all of the tiredness and weakness to make it to shore. He was tired from pulling in the nets then he had to row the boat home. Just imagine being tired, cold, weak, and scared and rowing a boat home so you will live. I don't know if I could do it. But he did.

He had to try hard but look how it turned out. He got the approval of his dad. That would mean a lot to anyone. He also knows he can do anything.

### Reading Comprehension Score Point 2

The response (shown above) includes a version of the first "Difficult circumstances overcome" exemplar (e.g., *He was tired from pulling in the nets*), a version of the fourth "Difficult circumstances overcome" exemplar (e.g., *rowing a boat home so you will live*), and a version of the third "How the experiences change him" exemplar (e.g., *He also knows he can do anything [anything]*). The response provides two different circumstances from the story and an explanation of how Karl changed from these circumstances. Therefore, this response receives a Score Point 2.

## Extended Response Writing Applications

### Score Point 2

The following list describes a writing sample (shown below) that earns a **Score Point 2** using the *ISTEP+* Extended Response Writing Applications Rubric.

This sample

- partially accomplishes the task (i.e., attempts to write an essay that describes the difficulties Karl faces but does not explain how the experiences changed him; the essay lacks development of ideas).
- provides minimal detail (e.g., *The other one is the storm comes, the motor quits [,] and he has to row*).
- makes an attempt to organize ideas but has no clear introduction or conclusion.
- exhibits minimal word usage and ordinary vocabulary (e.g., *He's allready* [already] *tired*).
- has some sense of audience (e.g., *The 2 [two] main things that Carl [Karl] have [has] to face is [are] the catching of the herring, pulling up the net, and getting them untangled from the net*).

## Extended Response Language Conventions

### Score Point 2

The following list describes a writing sample (shown below) that earns a **Score Point 2** using the *ISTEP+* Language Conventions Rubric.

This sample

- has correct capitalization.
- has mostly correct punctuation, with one exception (e.g., *The other one is the storm comes, the motor quits [,] and he has to row*).
- has correct spelling, with one exception (e.g., *allready* [already]).
- has grammar errors (e.g., *have* [has], *is* [are]) and no word usage errors.
- has no paragraphing.
- has no run-on sentences or sentence fragments.

**NOTE:** In a Score Point 2 paper, errors are typically frequent and may cause the reader to stop and reread part of the writing. While some aspects of the writing may be more consistently correct than others, the existing errors do not impair communication. With a little extra effort on the reader's part, it is still possible to discern most, if not all, of what the writer is trying to communicate.

### Essay

The 2 main things that Carl have to face is the catching of the herring, pulling up the net, and getting them untangled from the net. The other one is the storm comes, the motor quits and he has to row. He's allready tired.

## Reading Comprehension

### Score Point 1

The response (shown above) includes a version of the first "Difficult circumstances overcome" exemplar (e.g., *getting them untangled from the net*) and a version of the third "Difficult circumstances overcome" exemplar (e.g., *has to row*) but does not provide an explanation of how Karl changed from these circumstances. Therefore, this response receives a Score Point 1.

## Extended Response Writing Applications

### Score Point 1

The following list describes a writing sample (shown below) that earns a **Score Point 1** using the *ISTEP+* Extended Response Writing Applications Rubric.

This sample

- less than minimally accomplishes the task (i.e., attempts to write an essay that describes the difficulties Karl faces but does not explain how the experiences changed him).
- is too brief to establish a focus or provide significant information.
- attempts a basic idea but does not develop it with supporting details.
- is too brief to provide evidence of organization.
- demonstrates minimal writing technique.
- attempts some sense of audience (e.g., *Karl must decide weather [whether] to go with his Father [father] or not*).

## Extended Response Language Conventions

### Score Point 1

The following list describes a writing sample (shown below) that earns a **Score Point 1** using the *ISTEP+* Language Conventions Rubric.

This sample

- has errors in capitalization (e.g., *Father* [father], *Fishing* [fishing]).
- has correct punctuation.
- has correct spelling with one exception (e.g., *basicly* [basically]).
- has errors in grammar (e.g., *went* [gone]) and word usage (e.g., *cause* [because of]).
- has no paragraphing.
- has no run-one sentences or sentence fragments.

**NOTE:** The variety and proportion of errors in relation to the length of the writing sample are considered. A very brief paper consisting of two or three sentences may receive no more than 2 score points.

### Essay

Karl must decide weather to go with his Father or not. He has to do basicly all the work cause his injured Father. They should have never went Fishing.

## Reading Comprehension

### Score Point 0

The response (shown above) includes a version of the fourth "Difficult circumstances overcome" exemplar (e.g., *He has to do basicly [basically] all the work*) but does not provide a second circumstance and does not provide an explanation of how Karl changed from these circumstances. Therefore, this response receives a Score Point 0.

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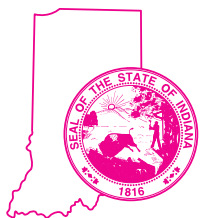
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# Grade 9

## English/Language Arts

# Fall 2007

## Teacher's Scoring Guide



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